

### **REMARKS**

Claims 1-3, 5-21, and 23-34 remain in connection with the present application. Claims 1 and 17 are the sole remaining independent claims in connection with the present application.

### **Prior Art Rejections**

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 – 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Axe et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons set forth in the Amendment of October 22, 2003. In addition, in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application and in an effort to further distinguish the present application from Axe et al., Applicants have amended independent claims 1 to include the limitation of claim 4, now cancelled, which is not taught or suggested by Axe et al (somewhat similarly, claim 17 has also been amended to include the limitation of claim 22, now cancelled).

Accordingly, although Applicants believe that the claims in their previous form were patentable over Axe et al. Accordingly, withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection and allowance of each of claims 1-3, 5-21, and 23-34 in connection with the present application is earnestly solicited. Again, rejoinder of claims 17-21 and 23-34 is respectfully requested.

### **CONCLUSION**

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the objections and rejections and allowance of each of claims 1-3, 5-21, and 23-34 in connection with the present application is earnestly solicited.

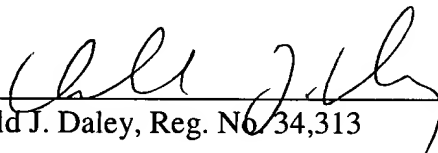
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number of the listed below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By

  
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